

iPhone 4S on sale today

By Gerald Rich
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It was just weeks ago that the mythical iPhone 5 seemed like a complete game changer with rumors flying — such as it can function as a credit card or it would have a sleek teardrop shape.

In reality however, the iPhone 4S and its iOS 5 are just reactive releases to catch up to the latest smartphones.

Here's a brief breakdown of Apple's big announcement.

Pre-orders open up for the new phone on Friday and it will be available for purchase on Oct. 14. Price points start at \$199 with the 16 gigabyte model, followed by the 32 GB and 64 GB models for \$299 and \$399.

HORNS UP

Camera — Some of the more genuinely exciting features are solely related to the phone's photo capabilities. The new iPhone is aiming to be a point-and-shoot camera killer with an eight-megapixel sensor, improved white balance and basic photo editing capabilities built in to iOS 5.

Although Samsung already had an 8 MP sensor on their phone, and there are some Android smartphones that come with 12 MP, this power, coupled with Apple's software, will result in some stunning photography. Just look at the Hipstamatic photo taken on an iPhone 4 that won third place for Picture of the Year International, a contest sponsored by the Reynolds Journalism Institute.

While some photographers criticized New York Times photographer Damon Winters for his use of the iPhone and the app, photojournalism professor Eli Reed encourages users to express themselves through photography.

"The technology may not be as good as a DSLR, but you got to get in the game if you're interested," said the Magnum photographer. "And if you're really interested, you'll learn."

A5 Processor — You don't have to be a geek to realize that this dual-core processor is

fast. Apple is claiming that it can run graphics seven times faster now. That means if you use your phone like as a computer, you'll have no problem multitasking in between and during classes.

Notifications — Taking another cue from Android, the new system will feature a flip-down bar at the top of your phone.

You can flick down to see notifications such as texts, emails, appointments, weather and stocks from the lock screen or within applications so it won't interrupt what you're doing.

HORNS DOWN

Siri — Say hello to the real Hal-9000. Siri, a voice command company bought by Apple about a year ago, has been integrated into the new phone as a built-in app. Say anything from, "Remind me to call my mom," to "Book a reservation for two at Uchi," or even ask "Do I need a raincoat?"

While this may sound awesome, Android phones already have an extensive voice command system, and how good will it be after a night out on Sixth Street? Can it translate slurred speech? Will it hear, "Call my girlfriend," and start dialing your ex?

Best and most terrifying scenario, it can tell that you're drunk and respond, "I'm sorry Gerald, but I can't allow you to do that."

Switching between antennas — So instead of redesigning the glaring problem with antennas that the iPhone 4 had, Apple has simply designed to work around it.

If you recall back to when the iPhone 4 first

came out, users who held the phone to their ear wound up blocking the cellphone's reception. Essentially, Apple created a not-so-smart phone that couldn't even make phone calls.

Apple's response was to alternate between the two antennas located on the sides of the phone. If you block one, then you'll receive data from the other. Additionally, the iPhone 4S claims to be able to download at speeds faster than 14 megabytes per second. In an ideal world that would be pretty amazing, but in cities such as Austin, especially during festivals, the actual speeds will vary.

In-depth Twitter integration — Apple and Facebook don't get along. Last year, the lead developer for Facebook's iPad app jumped ship and joined Google. That being said, Apple is trying for the next best thing with a deeper Twitter integration.

Unfortunately, Twitter is a very narrow market. According to the Pew Research Center, in June only 13 percent of adults used Twitter. Even The Daily Texan's own website sees more users coming from Facebook and Facebook Mobile than Twitter.

The upside is that more than half of those users access Twitter from their phones. Paired with the new camera capabilities, expect a deluge of Instagram photos and tweets related to anything and everything you're doing on your iPhone.

"Who cares if you just went to the bathroom or saw this movie?" said Bob Liu, finance sophomore and ITS technical consultant. "The [iPhone 4S] is just a new phone in an old body. I feel like they're holding out for the iPhone 5."

SENIORS don't miss out!

Oct. 18: A van will leave from the Bell Tower at 9:30 a.m. to head to UNCA going to a Career & Graduate School Fair from 12-2 p.m..

Oct. 19: A Peace Corps representative will be in the Myers Dining Hall Lobby from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. and will give a Peace Corps Interest Presentation in MSX 100 at 2 p.m.

Oct. 21: A representative from Semester at Sea will be in Myers Dining Hall Lobby from 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

Oct. 27: A van will leave from the Bell Tower at 12 p.m. to head to WCU for a Career & Graduate School Fair from 1-4 p.m.

Nov. 9: Resume Building for Employment or Internships search will be in MG125 at 6 p.m.